

1. In combination with a pipette tip including substantially cylindrical and axially spaced inner surface regions defining an annular sealing region and an annular lateral support region having predetermined inner diameters, a pipette tip mounting shaft comprising:

an axially elongated body for axially receiving the pipette tip, the axially elongated body comprising

a proximal end portion for support by a pipette to extend axially therefrom,

a distal end remote from the proximal end portion,

a substantially cylindrical outer surface region on the axially extending body adjacent the distal end and defining an annular sealing zone for mating with the annular sealing region within the pipette tip to form an air-tight seal between the shaft and the tip, and

a substantially cylindrical outer surface region on the axially elongated body axially spaced from the annular sealing zone and defining an annular lateral support zone having an outer diameter slightly less than the inner diameter of the substantially cylindrical lateral support region on the inner surface of the pipette tip as to space the lateral support zone from the lateral support region and thereby minimize mounting and ejection forces generated by a pipette user in mounting the tip on and ejecting the tip from the shaft.